

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, February 23, 1934.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY.)

Subject: "Jiffy Meals." Information from Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

--oOo--

Occasions do arise in this world when you have to feed the family in a hurry. Events do shape themselves so that now and then you can't spend time preparing a leisurely meal. No matter how well you plan, no matter how you arrange your work schedule, rush seasons will set in and you have to hurry a dinner together in a jiffy. Suppose you've been downtown shopping and get home late. Suppose the bridge party lasted longer than usual. Suppose you had to take little Junior to the doctor and it was well past five when you started home. Things like this just do happen.

So today I'm going to concentrate on some helpful pointers that the food specialists have given me about preparing meals in a hurry -- minus hustle, bustle and spoiled dispositions.

To begin with, they say, "Never be ambitious when you're in haste. Don't try to fix any complicated or long-time dishes. Concentrate on a few simple things that go well together. Prepare these in generous amounts and make them look extra good when they come on the table."

I once saw a flustered young hostess try to get a pot roast ready for guests in half an hour. If she had stopped to think, she would have known that pot roasts are among those cuts of meat that have to have long slow cooking. That's a true story, incredible as it may sound. Yes, and I've seen another wife try to bake and frost a large cake after her husband had phoned that he was leaving the office. What these two housekeepers needed to guide them away from last-minute mistakes are some good menus guaranteed to take a very short time in preparation. In your collection of menus, better include some for jiffy meals. Then, when you're belated, you can just turn to these suggestions and get your meal on time. If you find yourself out late on a shopping expedition, you can stop in at the grocery on the way home and pick up the materials for one of these quick meals.

First, about meats for a hasty meal. I don't have to tell you that roasts and stews and pot roasts and all other meats that require long cooking or fancy preparation won't do when you're in a hurry. You can't hurry them and have them appetizing. Your best choices are the meats that you can broil or pan fry, or the ready-prepared meats that you only need to heat and serve. Canned meats or fish you can often cream or heat up quickly in some other way. Salt meats, like bacon or dried beef, are also quick cookers. Chopped meat like hamburger steak or sausage is another item for your quick list. If you want to serve chicken, serve it fried or broiled, or serve canned chicken. But if you're in a hurry avoid the bird that must be stuffed and roasted. Eggs are especially helpful for quick main dishes -- scrambled, baked with cheese and so on.

2/23/34

Vegetables? Here again you'll be wise to stick to those that are easy to prepare and that cook quickly. Don't try to shell fresh peas or cut up green beans while your husband sits in the front of the house and tries to still his pangs of hunger. You can treat him to these good fresh vegetables tomorrow. Just now, he'll appreciate canned vegetables, fixed attractively, or raw vegetables in salad. If you keep salad dressing made up in quantity in the refrigerator, and if you also keep some salad greens there, all washed and crisp ready for serving, you won't have any trouble getting a delicious salad ready in record time.

Breads? Well, if you have a few extra minutes and are a fast worker, some hot biscuits or muffins will make a delicious addition to your quick meal. For a lunch or a supper in haste, waffles or pancakes may even be the main dish. But otherwise, better stick to plain bread or toast, or heated rolls from the bakery around the corner.

Now about dessert. Your canned fruits will usually come to the rescue here. Of course, you won't try to stir up a cake or roll out cookies or bake a pie when speed is at a premium. And you'll avoid steamed puddings, frozen desserts and gelatin moulds. Forget these until you have more time. If you want a hot dessert, broiled canned peaches are delicious and different. You can fix them in a jiffy. Melt marshmallows on the top if you want them extra fancy. Baked or fried bananas are also quick. Combinations of fruit in a chilled fruit cup make a welcome dessert at any time. You can combine fresh fruit you have on hand with canned varieties. Oranges, grapefruit and bananas all combine nicely with canned cherries, peaches, pears and so on. Sometimes if you have a few extra minutes, you can stir up one of these one-egg cakes, the kind that tastes best if you eat it hot. Serve the hot cake with jelly or fruit sauce or hot chocolate sauce, perhaps with a dab of whipped cream on top. Quick gingerbread, served hot with whipped cream makes another cake dessert.

We haven't mentioned the extras -- appetizers and relishes and so on. For a first-course appetizer, canned tomato juice or canned or fresh fruit juice, chilled is a possibility. Then, of course, chilled fruits, canned or fresh make a happy start to the meal. But don't go in for anything fancy if you're preparing fruit in a hurry.

Relishes? Well, perhaps you have some homemade pickles or some garden relishes put up last summer. They go especially well with many of the ready-prepared meats. A jar of jelly or preserve also makes a happy addition to many hasty meals. If you happen to have some crisp celery or radishes or carrot strips all ready and waiting in the refrigerator, well and good. But when the last-minute gong has struck, it's too late to try to clean and crisp celery or make radish roses.

We have just time now to plan one jiffy dinner, guaranteed to please the man of the house and to save every precious moment at the eleventh hour. Broiled minute steaks; Crisp fried potatoes or potato chips; Stewed tomatoes and canned corn together; Celery or some homemade pickles; Broiled canned peaches, plain or served on sponge cake.

###

